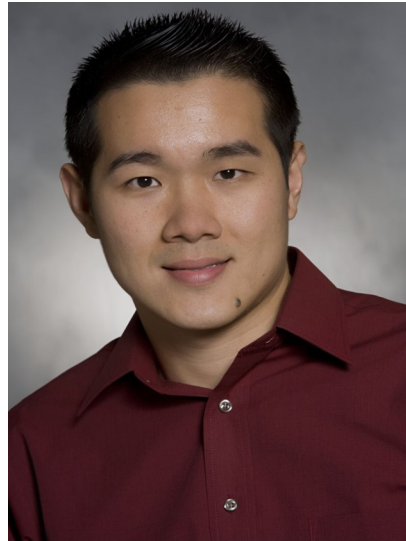


MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Chuen-Fung Wong

I am pleased to welcome you to the spring 2017 issue of the ACMR Newsletter, which is complete with a rich array of reports, reviews, reflections, and announcements that will be of great interest to students and teachers of Chinese music. We celebrated ACMR's thirtieth anniversary last December at our annual meeting in Washington, D.C. with a keynote speech delivered by founding president Professor Bell Yung. The Rulan Chao Pian Prize for the best article(s) on Chinese music was presented to its two recipients this year at the meeting. You may read the report of the meeting on pp. 14–15.

This issue of the Newsletter features a series of short reflection essays focusing on the topic of Chinese Canadian and American musical belongings. Yun Emily Wang, Colin McGuire, Heidi Chan, and Eric Hung, who recently presented their panel papers at the

annual conference of the Canadian University Music Society, will take a careful look at the place of Chinese music in the conception of Canadian and American musical landscape (pp. 6–10). We will also read reports of two other Chinese music-related conferences that took place earlier this year: Priscilla Tse will report on the annual meeting of the Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) in Toronto (p. 11); Helen Rees will report on the International Conference of the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research (CHIME) at UCLA (pp. 12–13). Finally, Mei Han will tell us about all the exciting collections, programs, research, and performing activities that are taking place at the Center for Chinese Music and Culture (of which she is director) at the Middle Tennessee State University (p. 5).

Meanwhile, Nora Yeh, donor of the Ruby Chao Yeh Award for Student Travel, has been working with me and other ACMR board members to revamp the Award, which currently provides a minimum of \$300 to support paper presentations at the annual SEM or ACMR meetings. Details will be announced in due course. Please continue to support all the three ACMR prizes. Once again, the editorial team, which consists of Yun Emily Wang, Lars Christensen, and Adam Kielman, deserves a big round of applause for all their time, effort, and commitment. If you have any question or comment about ACMR, please do not hesitate to contact me at wong@macalester.edu. I wish you a productive and enjoyable summer.

Chuen-Fung Wong
Macalester College
ACMR President

Inside this issue:

Ruby Chao Yeh Prize Announcement	2
Recent Publications	2
People and Places	3
ACMR Prizewinners	4
Center for Chinese Music and Culture	5
Chinese Music in North American Soundscapes	
Reflections by:	
Yun Emily Wang	6
Colin McGuire	7
Heidi Chan	9
Eric Hung	10
Conference Reports:	
CHINOPERL	11
CHIME	12
2016 ACMR Meeting Report	14
Upcoming Conferences	16

Ruby Chao Yeh Student Travel Award

The Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR) is proud to present the Ruby Chao Yeh Award for Student Travel. The award aims to promote graduate and undergraduate student research on Chinese music by supporting paper presentations at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM). The Yeh award will provide at least \$300 each year toward travel expenses for one student whose paper on Chinese music has been accepted in the SEM general program (with secondary consideration given to student paper presentations at the ACMR meeting). The award will be presented at the ACMR meeting held in conjunction with the SEM meeting and an announcement will be published in the ACMR newsletter.

The Yeh award committee will include three members: the ACMR President, Nora Yeh or Designate, and one additional ACMR officer. At the time of application, the applicant must be a registered full-time graduate or undergraduate student enrolled in any discipline in a US

academic institution. The proposed paper must show careful research and analysis that contributes to the scholarly study of Chinese music.

Applications must include:

1. One-page cover letter describing the applicant's background and current activities, indicating why the applicant deserves consideration for this award.
2. One-page CV
3. Abstract for accepted paper presentation
4. One letter of recommendation from an academic institution or equivalent, sent under separate cover

E-mail submissions are acceptable and preferred. Please send all materials to ACMR President Chuen-Fung Wong (wong@macalester.edu) by September 15, 2017. All applicants will be notified regarding the outcome of the award competition by October 15, 2017.

Membership Reminder

We encourage your new membership and renewal for the 2016–17 period. Current membership dues are \$15 for those in professional positions and independent scholars, and \$10 for students. Please define your status when paying. Please notify us of address and email changes. Payment can now be made through the ACMR PayPal account. If you wish to pay through this method send Alan Kagan a request for a PayPal invoice and currency

type (e.g. Hong Kong Dollars) at kagan001@umn.edu. Otherwise, make your payment by check to ACMR and mail to:

Alan L. Kagan, Treasurer
Association for Chinese Music Research
1376 Christensen Ave.
West St. Paul, MN 55118

Recent Publications

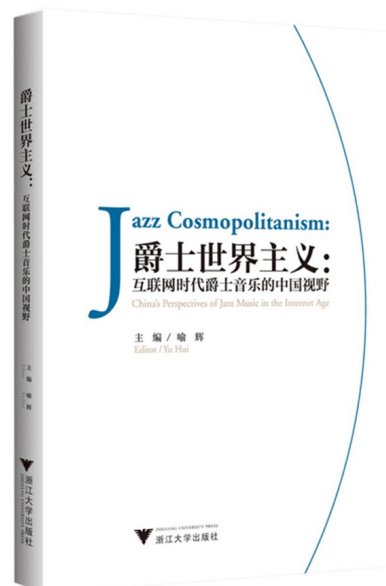
Da, Lin. 2016. "Heluo dagu chuantong dashu xuan (Selected Traditional Grand Stories from Heluo Drumsinging): An Attempt to Negotiate between the Fixed and Plastic Aspects of Chinese Traditional Narrative Oral Literature." *CHINOPERL* 35(2): 134–142.

Horlor, Samuel. 2017. "Community in Chinese Street Music: Sound, Song and Social Life." PhD diss., Durham University.
<http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/11984/>.

Yu, Hui 喻辉, ed. 2017. *Jueshi Shijie Zhuyi: Hulianwang Shidai Jueshiyinyue de Zhongguo Shiye* 爵士世界主义：互联网时代爵士音乐的中国视野 [Jazz Cosmopolitanism: Chinese Perspectives of Jazz Music in the Internet Age]. Zhejiang: Zhejiang Daxue Chubanshe.

Yu, Hui 喻辉, ed. 2017. *Dongfang Yinyue de Tici yu Xingshi* 东方音乐的体裁与形式 [The Forms and Genres of Oriental Music]. Anhui: Anhui Wenyi Chubanshe.

Yu, Hui 喻辉, ed. 2017. *Dongfang Yinyue de Lishi yu Guannian* 东方音乐的历史与观念 [The History and Aesthetics of Oriental Music]. Anhui: Anhui Wenyi Chubanshe.



People and Places

Lei Ouyang Bryant (2004 PhD from the University of Pittsburgh and ACMR President 2012–2015) will join the Department of Music and Dance at Swarthmore College in Fall 2017 as Associate Professor. Lei was previously Associate Professor at Skidmore College where she taught undergraduate ethnomusicology and Asian Studies courses for 11 years. She looks forward to re/connecting with Chinese music scholars and performers in the Philadelphia area.

Dr. Leonardo D'Amico, the current chair of the ICTM Study Group on Audiovisual Ethnomusicology, has joined the faculty of the Yunnan University College of Arts and Design as an adjunct associate professor since Spring 2017.

Adam Kielman was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Music at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He earned the PhD in Music from Columbia University in 2016 with a dissertation titled "*Zou Qilail: Musical Subjectivity, Mobility, and Sonic Infrastructures in Postsocialist China.*"

Priscilla Tse has successfully defended her dissertation, "Queering the Body: Cross-dressing Performance and Identity Politics in Cantonese Opera of Post-1950s Hong Kong," and has completed the PhD in Ethnomusicology from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

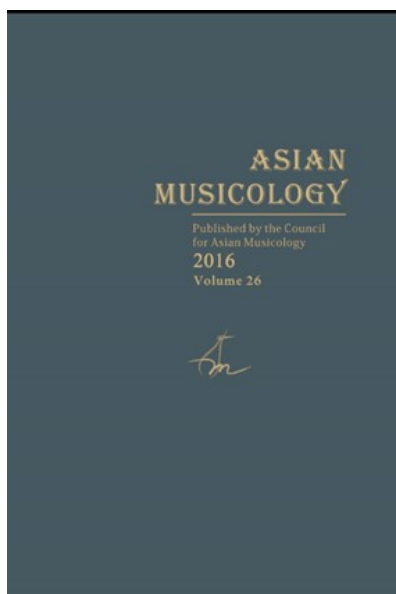
Yu Hui, professor and dean of Yunnan University College of Arts and Design has edited and published three books in 2017. *Jazz Cosmopolitanism: Chinese Perspectives of Jazz Music in the Internet Age* has been published by Zhejiang University Press in February 2017. *The History and Aesthetics of Oriental Music (Dongfang Yinyue de Lishi yu Guannian)*, and *The Forms and Genres of Oriental Music (Dongfang Yinyue de Tici yu Xingshi)*, both containing selected papers from past conferences of the Oriental Music Society of China, were published by the Anhui Press of Literature and Arts (Anhui Wenyi Chubanshe) in March 2017. For those who are interested in obtaining courtesy copies of those publications please contact us by email at musicology.china@gmail.com.

The journal **Asian Musicology** has been jointly published by Korean and Chinese scholars since 2016, after its

initial publication in 2000. The new issue of 2017 has recently published in China.

From November 11 to 15, 2016, **Yunnan University College of Arts and Design** in China hosted the International Symposium for Ethnomusicology and Music of Ethnic Minorities in Yunnan. More than 60 scholars from the United States, Denmark, Ireland, Germany, Korea and China attended the symposium. During the two-day conference, participants discussed new methodologies in ethnomusicology and trends in research of music of ethnic minorities in Yunnan. Music of South-east Asian countries bordering the province also drew much attention from the scholars. The ceremony of the establishment of The Center for Ethnomusicology of Yunnan University was also held during the conference. The Center will begin to recruit PhD students in ethnomusicology under the university's anthropology program beginning in 2018. For those who are interested, please contact us via email message at musicology.china@gmail.com.

Conference announcement: From September 22 to 25, 2017, the **12th Annual Meeting of The East Asian Society for Musical Tuning Systems (东亚乐律学会)** will be held at Yunnan University in Kunming, China. From September 24 to 25, 2017, the **Kunming International Symposium of Indigenous Arts** will also be held at the same venue. For those who are interested in participating, please submit an abstract by July 1 to musicology.china@gmail.com. Local accommodations will be covered by the organizer for those whose abstracts are accepted.



2016 ACMR Prizewinners

Rulan Chao Pian Prize

Awarded to the best article on Chinese music, broadly defined, published in an English-language scholarly journal or edited volume

The panel chose to award two Rulan Chao Pian prizes in 2016. Below are the abstracts of the prize-winning articles.

Joys H.Y. Cheung, National Taiwan Normal University

“Riding The Wind With Mozart’s ‘Jupiter’ Symphony: The Kantian And Daoist Sublimes In Chinese Musical Modernity”

Music and Letters 96 (4): 534–63.

The sublime was at the aesthetic core of Chinese musical modernity from the first half of the twentieth century onwards. Not only was it an important subject for modern thinkers who introduced key ideas from Western philosophy, but the concept of the sublime was also translated into various Chinese terms. Notions of the Kantian beautiful and sublime were central to an ongoing discourse, but the Kantian sublime was never formally addressed with respect to music. What do survive are aesthetic remarks by critics eulogizing music in terms of its manly vigour and monumental grandeur, and it is these that prompt investigation into the philosophical context for the vigorous sound ideal promoted by reformers. The composer Huang Zi (1904-38) is a central figure since he not only referred to the final movement of Mozart’s ‘Jupiter’ Symphony in terms corresponding to the Kantian sublime, but also characterized the second movement using language drawn from classical Chinese poetics that invoked the immortals’ wind-riding aspiration. His attribution of ‘*hun*’ echoed Daoist transcendence as found in classical lyric criticism and provides a starting point for theorization of the Daoist sublime as a component of modern Chinese aesthetics that continue classical poetics. Huang’s works embrace a sense of loss that places them apart from Chinese modernists’ emphasis on strength and virility in accordance with Western theories of the sublime.



**Bell Yung awards Joys Cheung the
2016 Rulan Chao Pian Prize**
(Photo credit: Nancy Guy)

Yang Yuanzheng, The University of Hong Kong

“*Jindou*: A Musical Form Found in Southern Song Lyrics”

T'oung Pao 101 (1–3): 98–129.

By introducing a newly-discovered manuscript copy of the lyric song anthology of the poet-musician Jiang Kui (1155–1221), this article aims to elucidate a hitherto unnoticed musical form of the genre: the *jindou* form. A comparison between the manuscript and all the early modern editions reveals discrepancies in the stanzaic divisions of four of Jiang’s seventeen songs for which he provided notation. Through musical analysis it is argued that the opening line of the second stanza in all the early modern editions may have been intentionally placed at the end of the first in the newly-discovered manuscript in order to remind the singer of the *jindou* form, in which the cadential notes of the first stanza immediately repeat at the beginning of the second. Therefore, these “unusual” stanzaic divisions are not mistakes, but indications of conventional performance practice in the Southern Song dynasty as dictated by musical factors.

The Center for Chinese Music and Culture at Middle Tennessee State University

Mei Han, Middle Tennessee State University

The Center for Chinese Music and Culture at Middle Tennessee State University celebrated its first anniversary in March 2017. The Center, located in Murfreesboro, on the outskirts of Nashville, occupies a space of 3,200 square feet. It contains a musical instrument gallery, classroom, library and archives.

The Center is under MTSU Liberal Arts College, and director Dr. Mei Han is an associated professor at the School of Music. The Center strives to contribute learning, scholarship, and service through teaching and sharing Chinese music and culture with regional and national communities. The Chinese music ensemble is now a School of Music credit course. Lessons on Chinese musical instruments are open to the local community and local schools' afterschool programs. In the last year, the Center presented lectures and demonstrations to several thousand students at universities and in local schools. The Center is currently hosting two visiting scholars from China.

The Center presents a series of concerts featuring traditional and contemporary music as well as intercultural and multicultural projects. The highlights have been the US debut performance of selected works from Xiansuo Shisan Tao (Thirteen Suites for Strings), a 1814 score from the Qing imperial court performed by renowned musicians from the Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing; a Silk and Bamboo ensemble led by the internationally renowned erhu performer Song Fei; a New Music concert project with Nashville based Intersection Music featuring compositions by American/Chinese composers Chen Yi and Zhou Long; and a "dueling dulcimer" concert costarring Chinese yangqin and American hammer dulcimer masters.



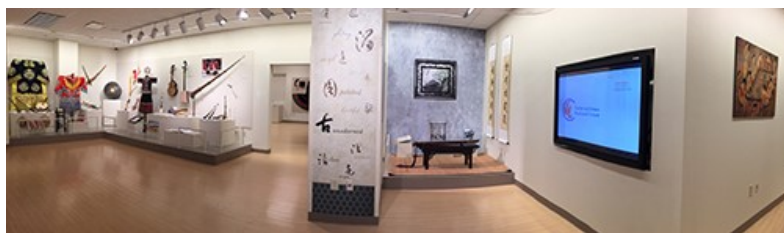
End of semester concert by the Chinese Ensemble

The instrument gallery displays over 100 Chinese musical instruments representative of the diverse cultures in China that includes replicas of historical instruments: a 24-piece Zeng Houyi (Marquis Yi) chime bell and an 18-piece stone chime (433 BCE), and a Tang dynasty five-string pipa. Hangzhou Normal University, the sister school of MTSU, donated instruments to equip a Chinese orchestra. The Center has also received generous donations from many scholars and institutions. In 2016, the Center received a sizable collection from the family of the late ethnomusicologist Fredric Lieberman that contains Lieberman's entire collection of

Chinese music of more than 300 vinyl records, tapes and CDs, and over 200 books and written musical works. Dr. Han Kou-Huang (professor emeritus of Northern Illinois University) donated over 100 records and books. The Center is in discussion with MTSU James E. Walker Library to add the Center's holdings to a number of University library databases so that they are available to researchers worldwide.



Setting up the chime bells



Musical instrument gallery

The Center has planned many new events for 2017 which will all be listed on its website (<http://mtsu.edu/chinesemusic/>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/CCMCMTSU/>). The Center is open to the public and students Monday through Friday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Question and Reflections: How Has Chinese Music Figured in Conceptions of the Canadian and American Musical Landscapes?

Yun Emily Wang, University of Toronto

In May of 2017, Asian-themed concerts (centrally featuring traditional and popular Chinese genres alongside fusion and experimental projects) took place nearly daily in cities like Toronto in celebration of the fifteenth iteration of [Canada's Asian Heritage Month](#). A wide array of Chinese musics permeated in the Canadian soundscape, serendipitously on the half-century mark of what some might call "[the birth of modern Canada](#)," a paradigmatic shift in policy to grant immigration on the basis of skill and education—rather than race or nationality—that enabled Canada's well-known multiculturalism and diversity today.

The Chinese communities hold a particularly large piece of the Canadian diversity pie. Already the largest non-European ethnic group whose [rapid growth is encouraged](#) and welcomed, Chinese languages are so widely spoken that you could take a driver's license exam in Cantonese, or speak Mandarin when phoning one of the provincial health service hotlines. The prominence of the Chinese in Canada, coupled with governmental support through multiculturalism grants, means that a vibrant cultural life in Chinese performing arts can be sustained. Many scholars have wonderfully captured how musical genres we might consider Chinese have taken root in Canada, and have been an important avenue through which Chinese Canadian identities might be negotiated (Chow-Morris 2009, Ng 1999, and brief mentions in Zheng 2010, to name just a few).

If the Chinese have figured so visibly in Canada's multicultural national narrative, and if there is no shortage of Chinese music here, should we expect a commensurate audibility in what we imagine to be the music of Canada? There certainly have been some efforts in incorporating Chinese sounds into the more mainstream avenues of Canadian music: the [Canadian Music Centre](#) recently hosted [a workshop on composing for Chinese instruments](#), and Wu Man's *pipa* was heard performing with the [Toronto Symphony Orchestra](#) just this February. But those efforts are far from consistent or representative: the Library and Archives Canada's collection on History of Music in Canada included only musical cultures for Canadians of European descent, for instance, and many textbooks on Canadian music reflect a similarly limited scope. So the question remains: How has (or has not) Chinese music figured in conceptions of musical Canada? How does that inclusion (or lack thereof) transpire at the institutional and infrastructural levels, in syllabi and

conference programs? Or, to put it bluntly: what is really being said when the musical life of Chinese Canadians is described as Chinese music in Canada, rather than Canadian music reflecting a history of Chinese immigration?

This is ultimately a localized version of the perennial question about World Music courses in American and Canadian music programs, but there is something at stake here that is particular to the Chinese in North America: In his book *Orientalism* (1999), historian Robert G. Lee argued that common tropes and portrayals of Chinese Americans in popular culture throughout the twentieth century has construed the Chinese to be permanent aliens who are inassimilable, tolerated but never fully accepted. Is it possible that categorizing Chinese Canadian musicking as Chinese music that just happens to take place in Canada might have an effect similar to what Lee has described? Can we ask the same questions about Chinese(-American) musics? These questions seem urgently relevant in today's North American political climate. It wasn't that long ago, after all, [that the Chinese people were subjected to a 19th century equivalent of the travel ban](#).

* * *

I first began thinking about these questions while endlessly circling between the Chinese and the Canadian music sections in the local library, whose taxonomy paid no mind to the fluidity of identities. I wasn't the first or the only one contemplating: also in May of 2017, Eric Hung (organizer), Colin McQuire, Heidi Chan, and myself presented a panel on Chinese Canadian musical belongings at the Canadian University Music Society's annual conference, asserting in very literal ways into a discourse sphere from which Chinese people and music have historically been absent and silent. Informed by our respective research projects discussed at the conference, the panelists also drew from personal experiences living and working in Canada, the U.S., and Europe, and reflected extensively on the questions outlined above. The panelists' reflections are included here. They are exploratory in nature, and are not meant to be comprehensive or conclusive. We hope they will serve as a starting point—a brick casted out in the hopes of attracting jade (抛磚引玉), so to speak—for conversations among ACMR members, many of whom theorize and practice Chinese music(s) outside of China and have significantly more experience than we do living the practical implications of this question.

Reflection: The Steadfast Sonic Presence of Chinese Music in Canada's Public Soundscape

Colin McGuire, University College Cork

The first Chinese people arrived in Canada in the late 1700s, but their important contributions to the development of a Canadian nation have historically been overlooked in favour of those made by Euro Canadians. In 2006,

former Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued an apology to Chinese Canadians for the racist exclusions faced by workers who came over from China in the late 1800s to build the western part of the trans-Canada railway that

was essential to the country's confederation. There are also now monuments to these labourers in Vancouver, Yale, Winnipeg, and Toronto. The latter has an inscription that reads, "Rich the hand which holds the stone of memory, 貢獻永存 念茲在茲"—but what about the sound of memory?

In this brief essay, I would like to address an important aspect of Canada's soundscape: Cantonese-style gong and drum (廣府鑼鼓) music used to accompany the Southern Chinese lion dance (南舞獅). In particular, I would like to point out the historical presence of these sounds in public celebrations. While we know that Cantonese opera theatre (粵劇) was the main source of entertainment in North American Chinatowns before World War II (Rao 2017), non-Chinese Canadians rarely saw these performances (Johnson 2005/06). The drum, gong, and cymbals used in processional lion dancing, however, have long been heard by Canadians of many backgrounds, thus making this music a part of the collective national soundscape.

During eight years of ethnographic fieldwork at Toronto's Hong Luck Kung Fu Club from 2008 to 2016, I participated in two Canada Day parades. These processions involved various groups from Toronto's Chinese community, all of whom gathered to march along a route through the downtown core. Hong Luck members animated two papier-mâché and cloth "lions," as well as



**Chinese Lion Dance and accompanying percussionists
at the celebration of the centennial of the City of Toronto, 1934**

(City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, items 335517 and 335518.

<http://www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen/en/database.php?c=1542> and

<http://www.mhso.ca/chinesecanadianwomen/en/database.php?c=1543>,

accessed May 5, 2017, originally published in *Globe and Mail*)

Chinese music in Canadian soundscape (cont.)

**Chinese Lion Dance and Parade at the celebration of VJ Day in Vancouver, 1945**

All photos from City of Vancouver Archives, accessed May 5, 2017

Top left: "Lion Dance in Chinese Parade During VJ Day Celebrations, photograph by James Crookall
James Crookall fonds, item CVA 260-1491. <http://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/lion-dance-in-chinese-parade-during-vj-day-celebrations>

Top right: "Chinese Parade Crossing the 400 Block East Hastings Street During VJ Day Celebrations," photograph by James Crookall
James Crookall fonds, item CVA 260-1494. <http://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/chinese-parade-crossing-400-block-east-hastings-street-during-vj-day-celebrations>

Bottom: "VJ Day Chinese Dragon Parade", photograph by Don Coltman, et al.
Williams Bros. Photographers Collection, item CVA 586-3965, <http://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/v-j-day-chinese-dragon-parade-2>

Chinese music in Canadian soundscape (cont.)

played their gong and drum ensemble. These percussion instruments were designed for use as signalling devices on ancient battlefields, which suits the martial ethos of a kung fu club. In a modern context, their loudness and sharp timbres help them to cut through city noise in order to be heard from as much as a block away.

While Hong Luck was “only” founded in 1961, I have uncovered older evidence of public events that included Cantonese lion dance and percussion. City archives in Vancouver have several sets of photos depicting Chinese lion dancers and percussionists

participating in a VJ Day parade on August 14, 1945, which marked the end of the Second World War. Toronto’s archives have even older pictures showing lion dancers and percussion at a public event held in honour of the city’s centennial on May 24, 1934. Notably, both these occasions took place at a time when Chinese Canadians were denied suffrage and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 had all but eliminated immigration from China to Canada. Recognizing Chinese Canadian sonic history is part of an ongoing process of decolonization that is essential to Canada’s officially espoused policy of multiculturalism.

Reflection: The Old, the New, and the Ageless Self

Heidi Chan, York University

The Millennium Chinese Music Workshop is a community Chinese music ensemble based in Mississauga, Canada. Founded in 2006 by Bill Ko, a retired teacher and conductor from Hong Kong, the Millennium orchestra is comprised entirely of elderly Chinese retirees, most of whom began learning a Chinese musical instrument after retirement. I came in contact with the Millennium Orchestra after my mother joined the group in 2014 as a *guzheng* player, and have since participated as a volunteer photographer, sound recordist, guest performer, and have joined them as a substitute keyboard player during their tour to Calgary in the spring of 2016.

The Millennium orchestra is a site in which notions of the “old” and the “new” are at a constant interplay in the personal and social experiences of its members. For example, the members’ persistent awareness of their “old” age is countered by, and also underscores, the “new” challenges of learning a musical instrument. At the same time, this social community also offers something “old” or “familiar:” a sense of belonging, support, friendship, and identity among fellow Chinese retirees all embarking on a “new,” late-life musical journey. Ko’s insistence on committing the orchestra to an active schedule of performances across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which incorporates performative expectations and challenges on this highly participatory community (Turino 2008), provides yet another set of “new” experiences for its participants.

In a group interview with eight of Millennium’s members, including its founder, Ko, a number of major themes emerge that help elucidate how notions of the “old” and the “new” play out through their experiences in the orchestra. For most members, the experience of learning a Chinese musical instrument with no prior experience and performing for others in the Chinese-Canadian community has offered opportunities for establishing new life goals and creating moments of self-discovery and self-empowerment. At the same time, performing old and familiar traditional and popular Chinese music repertoire has reconnected them to their personal histories and has evoked past life memories. But perhaps most importantly, and most profoundly, the inclusiveness, social engagement, and humanity (“人情味”) with which members engage with one another was unanimously alluded to by every interviewee as the main reasons for their commitment and continuous participation in the group. In this sense, the Millennium Music Workshop also serves as an example of what Sharon Kaufman discovered through her 1986 study on aging, that the elderly’s relationship with their age is rooted in an ongoing definition and revaluation of life’s meaning: “Old people formulate and reformulate personal and cultural symbols of their past to create a meaningful, coherent sense of self, and in the process they create a viable present. In this way, the ageless self emerges: its definition is ongoing, continuous, and creative” (Kaufman 1986, 14).

Reflection: Chinese Americans and the Impossibility of “Authenticity” in Popular Music

Eric Hung, Rider University

At this past February’s IASPM-US meeting, a speaker on a panel on campaign music argued that playlists released by presidential candidates are most effective when they appear “authentic” to the politician. This insightful paper got me to ponder, “Is musical ‘authenticity’ available to Chinese Americans who run for office?”

My initial answer to this question is a resounding no. Popular music genres in North America are defined largely by race, and politicians who use playlists consisting primarily of songs by the “wrong” races would likely be seen as “inauthentic” or, worse yet, as cultural appropriators.

Given that the “authenticity” discourse is unlikely to die any time soon, what can Chinese American popular musicians do to get a better foothold in the popular music industry?³ Eighteen years ago, Joseph Lam published a provocative article in which he asked scholars to embrace “Asian American music” as a “flexible heuristic device,” which he defines as “an inclusive gauge of musi-

cal, historical, and social parameters that allows comprehensive analyses of musical and non-musical attributes and meanings” (Lam 1999, 43). Although several scholars, such as Deborah Wong, Grace Wang, and Christie-Anne Castro, have heeded Lam’s appeal to use “Asian American music” as a central concept in their analyses, I still sense significant resistance to the term from many musicologists and ethnomusicologists. This reluctance is perfectly understandable. There is the fear of essentializing Asian-ness and minimizing the great diversity within Asian American communities. Moreover, many of the performers we write about do not particularly embrace the term. To me, however, we need to balance these fears with the reality that we still live in a country whose mainstream still by and large refuses to recognize and acknowledge Asian American experiences, achievements and struggles. At this particular time—whether we like it or not—a significant part of our jobs as scholars of Chinese American music is advocacy. And perhaps it is time for us to renew Lam’s call and more forcefully push the concept of “Asian American music” into the mainstream.

Notes

¹Not just in metropolitan centres like Toronto (10% of population) or Vancouver (20%), either—Lily Cho (2010) has observed (partly through songs by Joni Mitchell and Sylvia Tyson!) that Chinese restaurants is a quintessential aspect of life far beyond the ethnic enclaves typically found in major cities.

²See, for instance, the [B.C. Chinese Music Ensemble](#), the [Vancouver Chinese Music Ensemble](#), the [Toronto Chinese Orchestra](#), or the [Fairchild Radio Network](#) that broadcasts Cantopop daily.

³For an excellent analysis of Asian American rappers’ struggles with the “authenticity” discourse, see Wang 2007.

Works cited

- Cho, Lily. 2010. *Eating Chinese: Culture on the Menu in Small Town Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Chow-Morris, Kim. 2009. “‘Small Has No Inside, Big Has No Outside’: Montreal’s Chinese Diaspora Breaks Out/In Music.” *MUSICultures* 36: 49–82.
- Johnson, Elizabeth Lominska. 2005/06. “Evidence of an Ephemeral Art: Cantonese Opera in Vancouver’s Chinatown.” *BC Studies* 148 (Winter): 55–91.
- Kaufman, Sharon R. 1994. *The Ageless Self: Sources of Meaning in Late Life*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Joseph S.C. Lam. 1999. “Embracing ‘Asian American Music’ as an Heuristic Device.” *Journal of the Association for Asian American Studies* 2 (1): 29–60.
- Lee, Robert G. 1999. *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Ng, Wing Chung. 1999. *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945–80: The Pursuit of Identity and Power*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Rao, Nancy Yunhwa. 2017. *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Turino, Thomas. 2008. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*. University of Chicago Press.
- Wang, Oliver. 2007. “Rapping and Repping Asian: Race, Authenticity, and the Asian American MC.” In *Alien encounters: Popular culture in Asian America*, edited by Mimi Thi Nguyen and Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu, 35–68. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Zheng, Su. 2010. *Claiming Diaspora: Music, Transnationalism, and Cultural Politics in Asian/Chinese America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Conference Report: CHINOPERL Annual Meeting and AAS Annual Conference

Priscilla Tse, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) Annual Meeting was held at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto, Ontario (Canada) on March 16, 2017, in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) Annual Conference. This year's meeting featured over thirty presenters in twelve panels and one shadow puppet (*piying xi*) presentation. Enthusiastic scholars from North America, China, and Japan actively engaged in discussions. The conference papers covered a wide range of approaches, genres, historical periods, places, and performance contexts: from textual analyses to ethnographic studies; from traditional narratives, operas, and shadow theater to contemporary spoken drama; from ritual opera to amateur Chinese opera clubs in North America; from individual actors to fans.

After lunch, Stephen Kaplin of the Chinese Theatre Works from New York presented a *piying xi* performance featuring *The Story of the White Snake* 白蛇傳. This was not a traditional *piying xi* but an animation-like slideshow projected on a screen with prerecorded music and Kaplin's live narrative with role-playing in English. A fan of *piying xi* and Chinese theater, Kaplin had collected shadow puppets over the years. His slideshow combined still photos of shadow pup-



Discussion at the CHINOPERL conference
(Photo credit: Priscilla Tse)

pets, accompanied by various kinds of music including *piying xi*, *kunqu*, and contemporary arranged Chinese instrumental music. Although most of the people in the audience were familiar with the story and *piying xi* performance, the use of this new medium can be viewed as an innovative attempt in promoting *piying xi* and Chinese theater to non-Chinese audiences when resources are limited. However, if the budget allows, I would like to see a live demonstration of *piying xi* at a future CHINOPERL meeting because it may better inform the audience about the interactions between musicians and puppet master, performers' spontaneity and improvisation, and insights into the learning process.



Three scenes from the *piying xi* (Photo credit: Priscilla Tse)

Conference Report: 20th International Conference of the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research (CHIME)

Helen Rees, University of California, Los Angeles

The World Music Center of the Department of Ethnomusicology, UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music, hosted this year's CHIME conference from Wednesday 29 March to Sunday 2 April 2017 in UCLA's Schoenberg Music Building. Financially supported by the UCLA Confucius Institute, the Fudan-UC Center, the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research, the UCLA Center for Chinese Studies, the UCLA Asia Pacific Center, the UCLA Program on Central Asia, and the UCLA Department of Ethnomusicology, the conference attracted fifty-two participants from twelve countries/regions (the US, mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, Australia, Canada, the UK, France, the Netherlands, and Portugal). The two main themes were "festivals" (broadly defined) and the music of western China and its neighbors. Thirty-two 20-minute papers were presented, along with three films, two posters, and one roundtable. Keynote presenters were Bell Yung, Professor Emeritus of the University of Pittsburgh, who spoke on his new research on the biography of his own Ming-dynasty *qin* ("Pines in Ten Thousand Valleys: A Life"); and Ito Satoru, Research Fellow of the Japan Society for



Tanya Merchant teaching the Uzbek classical music workshop
(Photo credit: Helen Rees)

the Promotion of Science, who introduced and showed two of his recent films on the ritual soundscape of the Tai people of Dehong, western Yunnan province.

To emphasize the theme of western China and its neighbors, we organized four workshops: "Connections among Chinese, Thai and Lao Instruments" (Chi Li [UCLA], Christopher Adler [University of San Diego], Supeena Insee Adler [UCLA]); a hands-on workshop on Thai classical music (the Adlers); a hands-on workshop on Chinese instruments (Chi Li); and a hands-on workshop on Uzbek classical music (Tanya Merchant [UCSC]). The conference concert was held on the evening of Saturday 1 April. The first half focused on music of, and musical connections

between, China and upland Southeast Asia; the second half focused on music of, and musical connections among, northwest China, Central Asia, and the Near East. We enjoyed excellent performances by the workshop presenters and other conference participants, and were extremely privileged that UCLA professors A. J. Racy and Münir Beken kindly gave up their evening—not to mention time earlier on for rehearsals—to provide unforgettable performances of Near Eastern and fusion genres. The participation of students from UCLA's Music of China ensemble, directed by Professor Chi Li, was especially significant, as the group is coming up shortly on its 60th birthday—an indication of the deep roots Chinese music has put down at UCLA.



Frank Kouwenhoven discusses his contribution to the poster session (Photo credit: Helen Rees)

CHIME Conference (cont.)

Other highlights included an exhibition in the Gamelan Room of UCLA's collection of 1960s-era Chinese musical instruments, along with the Javanese and Balinese gamelans and the southern Philippine kulintang; an excursion on Sunday 2 April to the Chinese American Museum in downtown Los Angeles; and the formal presentation to Professor Zhang Xingrong (Yunnan Art Institute) by Bernard Kleikamp of Pan Records (Leiden, Netherlands), of a two-CD set of Professor Zhang's recordings of Bai and Dai opera. Titled *Music of the Bai Opera and the Dai Opera in Yunnan Province* (Pan 2120/21), this set was issued in March 2017, following a multi-year collaboration by Professor Zhang, Ito Satoru, Helen Rees, and Yang Hong.



UCLA professors A. J. Racy and Chi Li performing at the CHIME concert (Photo credit: Helen Rees)



CHIME participants in the courtyard (foreground, left to right: Li Weier, Bell Yung, Nora Yeh, Hwee San Tan) (Photo credit: Helen Rees)

Report on the 2016 ACMR Annual Meeting

The 2016 ACMR Annual Meeting took place on the evening of December 3 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. in conjunction with the Society for Ethnomusicology's Sixty-first Annual Meeting.

Professor Bell Yung, founding president of ACMR and Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of Pittsburgh, gave a keynote lecture in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of ACMR. His keynote lecture, "An Audience of One: The Private Music of the Chinese Literati," was introduced by Professor Helen Rees (UCLA, Ethnomusicology).

After Professor Yung's keynote lecture concluded, ACMR President Chuen-Fung Wong called the business meeting to order at 9:00 p.m. with thirty people in attendance.

The meeting began with introductions from officers and members, and approval of the minutes of the 2015 meeting:

- Officers introduced themselves; Sue Tuohy and Jessica Turner sent their regrets for not being able to be in attendance.
- All other members in attendance introduced themselves.
- Meeting minutes from 2015 were approved.

President Chuen-Fung Wong reported on several general ACMR matters:

- There have been two newsletters published during the course of 2016.
- ACMR prizes have been managed by the prize committee.
- ACMR sponsored two panels at the SEM meeting in 2016. In addition, one roundtable and one panel dedicated to Chinese music topics were held. There were, in total, 13 papers related to Chinese music presented. Chinese music presence is quite lively at SEM, and this is one of the better-represented years.
- Looking ahead to next year, elections will be held for ACMR president, ACMR secretary, and ACMR newsletter editor.
- President Wong solicited input from members for ideas for next year's ACMR meeting. Ideas proposed including considering new formats for the first hour, and thinking aggressively for something related to performance.



Bell Yung delivers his keynote lecture
(Photo credit: Lars Christensen)

- Regarding ACMR's prizes (Pian, Smith, and Yeh), President Wong reported that in the past, there has been a steady pool of applicants. This year, however, there were no applicants for the Smith or Yeh prizes. Members briefly discussed how to better promote these prizes.

President Wong then announced the winners of the Pian prize. In total, six applications were received. Of these, two outstanding papers were selected by the committee:

- Cheung, Joys H. Y. 2016. "Riding the Wind with Mozart's 'Jupiter' Symphony: The Kantian and Daoist Sublimities in Chinese Musical Modernity." *Music and Letters* 96 (4): 534–63.
- Yang, Yuanzheng. 2015. "Jindou: A Musical Form Found in Southern Song Lyrics." *T'oung Pao* 101 (1–3): 98–129.
- Abstracts of both prize-winning articles can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Reports from ACMR officers were delivered: Alan Kagan then gave the treasurer's report:

- In short, this is not a money-making organization, but what money we do have is the result of 30 years of growth.

ACMR Annual Meeting (cont.)

- ACMR has 40 paying members—this membership level has roughly stayed the same over many years.

The Secretary's report, provided by ACMR Secretary Jessica Turner, was read by President Wong.

- ACMR continues to work toward non-profit status.

Alec McLane, bibliographies editor, then gave a report on ongoing work on the ACMR bibliography.

Newsletter editors Adam Kielman, Lars Christensen, and Yun Emily Wang gave a brief report on the newsletter.

- The editorial team is seeking a new member. Interested parties are encouraged to contact the editorial team.

The meeting then opened for members to speak about any matters of interest or relevance:

Several members addressed the lack of applications for the Smith and Yeh prizes.

- Nora Yeh suggested ideas for adjusting the requirements of the Yeh student travel award, including making it available to all graduate students—international rather than just U.S. students. Preference would be given to a graduate student who gives a paper at SEM or ACMR; second preference would be given to a first time attendee. No matter what, a recommendation letter will still be required.
- Alan Kagan suggested an alternative scheme in which the prizes are awarded by lottery.

- President Wong suggested more intense solicitation for applications.
- Yun Emily Wang shared ideas to that end: announcing the prizes on the SEM-L (not just ACMR-L) prior to SEM, so that students are motivated, and advisors who are not Chinese music scholars can encourage their students wherever appropriate.

President Wong then brought up the SEM Strategic Plan 2017–2021.

- In accordance with this plan, ACMR should work toward producing Chinese translations of ethnomusicological writings.
- Related matters would be distributed on ACMR-L for further discussion.

Helen Rees then discussed the upcoming CHIME (European Foundation for Chinese Music Research) meeting to be held at UCLA in the spring, introducing the meeting and reminding members that abstracts are due on November 15.

President Wong called for any old business or new business. Having addressed all business matters, there was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 pm.

We are grateful to all of the members who attended the 2016 ACMR meeting and hope to see those of you who were unable to attend at a meeting in the near future.



Chuen-Fung Wong convenes the business meeting (Photo credit: Lars Christensen)

Chuen-Fung Wong

Macalester College
president

Jessica Anderson Turner

Indiana University and Birthplace
of Country Music Museum
secretary

Alan Kagan

Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities
treasurer

Sue Tuohy

Indiana University
member-at-large

Elise Anderson

Indiana University
student member

Yuan-Yu Kuan

University of Hawai'i, Manoa
student member and
bibliography editor

Meredith Schweig

Emory University
bibliography editor

Aimei Luo

Chinese University of Hong Kong
bibliography editor

Alec McLane

Wesleyan University
bibliography editor

Theodore Kwok

University of Hawai'i, Manoa
website editor

Adam Kielman

Chinese University of Hong Kong
newsletter editor

Lars Christensen

Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities
newsletter editor

Yun Emily Wang

University of Toronto
newsletter editor

Upcoming Conferences

19th Biennial IASPM Conference: Popular Music Studies Today

June 26–30, 2017
University of Kassel, Kassel, Germany
<http://www.iaspm.net>

44th ICTM World Conference

July 13–19, 2017
Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland
<http://www.irishworldacademy.ie/ethnomusicology-special-events/ictm-world-conference>

12th Annual Meeting of The East Asian Society for Musical Tuning Systems (东亚乐律学会)

September 22–25, 2017
Yunnan University, Kunming, China
musicology.china@gmail.com

Kunming International Symposium of Indigenous Arts

September 24–25, 2017
Yunnan University, Kunming, China
musicology.china@gmail.com

Society for Ethnomusicology 2017 Annual Meeting

October 26–29, 2017
Denver, Colorado
<http://www.indiana.edu/~semhome/2017/>

Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference

March 22–25, 2018
Washington, D.C.
www.asian-studies.org/Conferences/AAS-Annual-Conference/

21st CHIME (European Foundation for Chinese Music Research) Meeting

May 9–13, 2018
Macau Scientific & Cultural Centre & University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal
<http://www.chimemusic.nl/>

About ACMR

The Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR) serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information for anyone interested in the scholarly study of Chinese music. Catering mainly though not exclusively to those living in North America, ACMR holds an annual meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology.

ACMR's online discussion group is hosted by the University of Hawai'i. To send messages to the list, please use the address acmr-l@lists.hawaii.edu. If you have any questions about the list, write to **Ted Kwok** at tedk@hawaii.edu.

ACMR Newsletter is published twice a year in spring and fall. We encourage ACMR members to submit the following kinds of materials: notices of recent publications and recently completed dissertations or theses, announcements of and reports on scholarly and performing activities, news of institutions and individuals, as well as views and opinions on any matter relevant to ACMR. Please send all materials and enquiries to ACMRnewsletter@gmail.com. Back issues are available at <http://acmr.info/>.